Human Subjects Ethics in Russia and Guatemala: Venereology and the Gaze of History

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Clinical Research Building (CRB) Conference Room 1179A

Please bring a lunch (No RSVPs required)

Russian writer, philosopher and physician Vikenty Vikentyevich Veresaev (1867-1945) published Memoirs of a Physician in 1901. The book, which focuses on medical ethics, quickly generated great and sustained interest. After the first Russian-language publication, English, French and German translations quickly followed. Indeed, Veresaev’s Memoirs were arguably a catalyst for the growth of European interest in medical ethics. In a discussion of “medical experiments on humans,” he suggested that, unlike most other questions in the field of medical ethics, “for which there are no conclusive answers,” these questions “have only one unequivocal solution.” Veresaev chose to limit his analysis to one area of research, venereology, because it is exclusive to humans (i.e., there is no equivalent in animals). Veresaev’s work provides a noteworthy historical touchstone for analysis of recently revealed U.S. syphilis research abuses in Guatemala.

Dr. Yudin is professor and corresponding member of the Russian Academy of Sciences (RAS) and head of the Department of Comprehensive Problems of Human Studies in the RAS Institute of Philosophy. He lectures on biomedical research ethics for the Moscow State University of Medicine and Dentistry. Dr. Yudin is the Russian representative on the Council of Europe’s Steering Committee on Bioethics and Vice-Chair of the Russian Committee on Bioethics for UNESCO’s Commission of the Russian Federation. He serves on the International Research Panel of President Obama’s Commission for the Study of Bioethical Issues.

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